



# NEWS RELEASE

## VIRGINIA AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

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### AGRICULTURAL ECONOMIC SURVEY WILL MEASURE FARM FINANCIAL HEALTH

Virginia agricultural producers will have the opportunity to "let the facts be known" by participating in the 2004 Agricultural Resource Management Survey conducted by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS). This survey provides the leading economic indicators about the agricultural industry used by members of the agricultural community and their legislators when making important decisions that support America's farmers and ranchers.

Data collected will present the only objective, true picture of the financial well-being of Virginia farm operators and will provide an accurate portrayal as Congress monitors the benefits of the Farm Bill. These data are also a resource when policymakers determine Federal assistance. During 2003, USDA's Farm Services Agency (FSA) distributed to producers \$15.9 billion in farm program payments including \$2.2 billion in conservation funding, and \$3.1 billion in emergency assistance payments.

Agricultural producers chosen to participate in the survey will represent from 50 to 100 fellow producers and will therefore make an important contribution to the overall welfare of America's farmers and ranchers. All individual data collected are held strictly confidential by law (Title 7, U.S. Code). Only statistical totals are published for selected geographic regions and the Nation.

Results from the survey will be used by agricultural producers, producer organizations, commodity groups, lenders, university researchers, news media, local USDA agencies, farm suppliers, and others to evaluate economic challenges facing America's food and fiber producers, measure the profitability of agricultural production, assess the ability for producers to maintain sustainable farms and determine the need for farm financial assistance.

*Farm Production Expenditures*, the first report with results from the survey, will be released in July 2005. For a copy of the finished report or to obtain other agricultural statistics, visit the National Agricultural Statistics Service website at [www.usda.gov/nass/](http://www.usda.gov/nass/) or call 1-800-727-9540.